

(Oct. 1990)

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Propertyhistoric name Harlinsdale Farmother names/site number N/A**2. Location**street & number 239 Franklin Road☐ not for publication N/Acity or town Franklin☐ vicinity N/Astat Tennessee code TN county Williamson code 187 zip code 37064
e _____**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☐ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☒ statewide ☒ locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See Continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

☐ entered in the National Register.☐ See continuation sheet☐ determined eligible for the
National Register.☐ See continuation sheet☐ determined not eligible for the
National Register.☐ removed from the National
Register.☐ other, (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Harlinsdale Farm
Name of Property

Williamson County, Tennessee
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☐ private
☒ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- ☐ building(s)
☒ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
14	4	buildings
1	1	sites
4	0	structures
0	0	objects
19	5	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Historic Family Farms in Middle Tennessee, 1780-1955 MPS

Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture: animal facility; storage; agricultural field; agricultural outbuilding
Industry: energy facility
Domestic: single dwelling; secondary structure

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture: animal facility; storage; agricultural field; agricultural outbuilding
Domestic: single dwelling; secondary structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Queen Anne
Colonial Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete; stone; brick
walls Weatherboard; stone

roof Asphalt shingle; metal

other Glass; metal

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See continuation sheets.

8. Statement of Significance**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is: N/A

- ☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** moved from its original location.
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture

Architecture

Period of Significance

c. 1900-1956

Significant Dates

c. 1900, 1935, 1945

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown, multiple

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ Previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☐ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State Agency
- ☐ Federal Agency
- ☒ Local Government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository:

Williamson County Archives, Franklin, TN

Harlinsdale Farm
Name of Property

Williamson County, Tennessee
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 198 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

Franklin 63 NE

1	16	512354	3977887
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2	16	512999	3977536

3	16	512308	3976347
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4	16	511556	3976733

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Carroll Van West and Gregory Lynch
organization MTSU Center for Historic Preservation date September 20, 2005
street & number P. O. Box 80, Middle Tennessee State University Telephone (615) 898-2947
city or town Murfreesboro state TN zip code 37132

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Mayor Tom Miller
street & number Franklin City Hall, 109 3rd Avenue South telephone 615-791-3212
city or town Franklin state TN zip code 37064

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Harlinsdale Farm
Williamson County Tennessee

Description

Harlinsdale Farm is a 198-acre historic district north of downtown Franklin on the west side of U. S. Highway 31 (Franklin Road). The highway provides a portion of the western boundary of the property while the Harpeth River is the eastern boundary. The property's entrance faces the location of the historic Dortch Stove Works (NR 11/13/1997), which is a c. 1930 factory complex that lies on the east side of U.S. Highway 31. The nominated property contains 18 contributing and 4 non-contributing resources. The related buildings and structures of the Harlinsdale stables visually dominate the nominated property. The stables are connected to the highway by a paved driveway, which is lined by a white board fence that splits the eastern most horse pasture into two separate fields. Large expanses of open land, critical for a training stable, characterize the farm.

1. Main Horse Stable (1935)

At the center of the complex, approached by a paved road, is the main horse stable, completed in 1935. Set back about 680 feet from Franklin Road, the long façade of the gable end stable is parallel to the road and only the wood fence lining the drive to the barn interrupts the view. This arrangement was an innovation in the modern revival of the Tennessee Walking Horse industry in the 1930s.

The one story plus monitor roof main horse stable is capped by a green asphalt shingle gable roof, sheathed with white weatherboard and green wood trim, and rests on a concrete slab foundation. It has a centered gable bay entrance on both front and rear facades and two side wings, creating a cross-shaped plan precedent setting for Tennessee Walking Horse stables. This bay projects approximately fifteen feet from the wings, which are approximately forty feet long. The front, or east facade (street façade) has two wood six-over-six double hung sash windows flanking the one-story overhead rolling "garage-type" door on the central projecting bay. Above the door in the monitor roof are two three-paned single sash windows with a single metal tube centered between them that projects, curving downward. The walls are constructed of five-inch weatherboarding. The first story wings each contain four open, barred, and symmetrically placed square windows. The monitor roof repeats this pattern but with five windows, two of which abut the central bay.

The principal features of the south elevation are the two sliding wood doors. Each door has a square six-pane window. Flanking the entry doors are square windows identical to those on the east façade, while the monitor roof also repeats the window and lighting pattern of the east façade. Also visible are the south elevations of the central bays of the east (farm side) and west (street side) facades. Evident on the eastern part are two six-over-six double hung sash windows on the first story and two

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

Harlinsdale Farm
Williamson County Tennessee

triple paned single sash windows in the monitor roof. The western section has one six-over-six double hung sash window on the first story.

The rear or west facade, facing the farm, is similar to the east facade, except that it has single windows flanking its "garage" door on its gabled bay, and a five foot red brick chimney abuts the extreme south edge of the lower roof.

The north elevation is an exact copy of the south elevation.

The interior of the main horse stable is arranged along a long central hall with two shorter halls projecting at right angles to the central hall, forming a cross layout. The long hall that runs north and south is wide and it is utilized for indoor training. The western hall is utilized for crossties and grooming, with a lodging space (bed and sink) provided for groomsmen. The eastern hall is for receiving visitors and an office is located in the northeast corner of the east entrance. The large hall has ten stalls on its west side while the east side has eight stalls and two utility rooms situated at the southeast and northeast corners. At the southeastern corner are stairs to the upper floor.

The short west hall has a break room and bathroom in its southwest corner while the northwest room is the tack and equipment room. This section of the barn was designed for the work and occupation of farm employees.

The short east hall was designed for customers and managers of the farm. The southeastern room in this hall has a dual purpose "ladies lounge" and reception office. The northeastern room is the farm's main office, which has stained wood paneling, marking the space as different from the unadorned walls of the rooms used by farm employees. Its walls are adorned with various successful horses, riders, and trainers associated with the stable, making this space a virtual museum of the Tennessee Walking Horse industry along with a very effective advertisement of the many winners produced at Harlinsdale Farm.

The second floor is entirely open and utilized as a hayloft and equipment storage. The four separate L-shaped terraces are connected to each other through a system of catwalks in the center of the building. These arch over the halls in a square formation around the center space.

The building's interior retains a high degree of integrity, from the wood stall doors, the wood roof trusses that dominate the main hallway, to the interior wood walls and doors of the shorter hallways. The main horse stable is a contributing building (C).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

Harlinsdale Farm
Williamson County Tennessee

2. Equipment House/Power House (1929, c. 1945).

The equipment house is a brick gable roof building with a concrete foundation and an open bay entrance on the south side. It has two portions to it, the larger eastern section, approximately 60 feet by 60 feet, is two stories in height. The western section, approximately 180 feet long and 60 feet wide, is one story in height. This building was built as the electrical powerhouse for the Franklin Light & Power Co. The Harlins, needing space for the storage of heavy equipment, renovated the building c. 1945 by removing two large doors from the south wall, creating an open bay. (C)

3. Secondary Stock Barn (c. 1935)

The secondary stock barn has a metal gable roof, board and batten siding, and a concrete foundation. This transverse crib barn measures approximately 60 feet (façade) by 40 feet and has unpainted wood doors at each end. Original shed extensions flank the main barn. Each side has four pens and four windows, except on the north side where one pen has an open wall closed by a metal gate. (C)

4. Small Horse Stable (c. 1935, c. 1950)

The small horse stable is a rectangular off-center gable entrance structure with a concrete foundation and metal gable roof. A shed extension was added to the north wall of the stalls c. 1950. The barn has four pens, with three being used as horse stalls while one is an open space for storage. (C)

5. Large Horse Stable (c. 1975)

The large building is north of the main stables, separated from the rest of the farm by its own board fence. The stable is a long narrow rectangular shaped building with a concrete foundation and metal gable roof. The east elevation and the west elevation both contain fourteen stalls for a total of 28 stalls in the building. It is approximately 200 feet by 30 feet, with an extended shed roof projecting out approximately another six feet on either side. This prominent overhang helped to protect the animals from inclement weather. (NC, due to date of construction).

6. Grave of Midnight Sun (c. 1965)

The grave of Midnight Sun is placed just northeast of the main barn's facade and is a small 10-foot by 5-foot fenced plot. Within the fence is a headstone that has a picture of the stallion and reads "Midnight Sun No. 410751/ The Horse of the Century/ 1940 - 1965/ The Champion Under Saddle/ The Champion As A Sire/ The

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 4

Harlinsdale Farm
Williamson County Tennessee

Champion Of The Breed.” This addition to the main barn complex, nestled under a large tree, blends seamlessly into the panorama and thus does not pose any threat to the site’s historical integrity. (NC, due to date of construction)

7. Laborer’s House (c. 1930)

One-story rectangular-shaped symmetrical three-bay weatherboard dwelling, with an asphalt-shingle gable roof, a concrete stoop, and brick foundation. The north facade has a wood door central entrance, flanked by six-over-six double hung sash windows. The house plan is irregular and there is an interior brick chimney. (C)

8. Laborer’s House (c. 1930, 1950)

One-story square-shaped symmetrical three-bay weatherboard dwelling in a restrained Colonial Revival style, with an asphalt-shingle gable roof, a projecting central concrete porch with square wood posts supporting a central pediment, and brick foundation. Six-over-six double hung sash windows flank the central wood door entrance. The house plan is irregular and there is an interior brick chimney. At the southwest corner of the dwelling, an enclosed shed roof rear porch was installed c. 1950. (C)

9. Laborer’s House (c. 1930, 1945)

One-story square-shaped symmetrical three-bay weatherboard dwelling in a restrained Colonial Revival style, with an asphalt-shingle gable roof, a projecting central concrete porch with square wood posts supporting a central pediment, and brick foundation. Six-over-six double hung windows flank the central wood door entrance. Moved c. 1945 from the entrance lane to the property to a new location south of the main horse stables. (C)

10. Laborer’s House (c. 1930, 1945)

One-story rectangular-shaped symmetrical two-bay weatherboard dwelling, with an asphalt-shingle gable roof, a concrete porch that has two square wood posts supporting a hipped roof at the east gable end, and brick foundation. The two-bay west facade contains a wood door entrance at the southeast corner while a six-over-six double-hung sash window is at the northeast corner. Interior central brick chimney. Moved c. 1945 from the entrance lane to the property to a new location to the south of the main horse stables. (C)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 5

Harlinsdale Farm
Williamson County Tennessee

11. Storage shed (c. 1975)

The southernmost building on the nominated property is a one-story wood frame building with concrete foundation and metal shed roof. (NC, due to date of construction)

12. Harlin Hayes Farmhouse (c. 1900, 1920)

The Harlin Hayes Farmhouse is a one-story weatherboard gable-front-and-wing style dwelling with asphalt shingle hipped roof and concrete block and brick pier foundation. The south façade has three symmetrical bays, with central bay consisting of a wood Eastlake-influenced entrance door with glass transom, flanked by one-over-one double-hung sash windows. A dormer window of 36 lights over a single light provides is centrally located on the roof. A Victorian era millwork porch, supported by tapered wood columns, begins at the gable-end projection of the south facade and wraps around to the east elevation.

The east elevation has two symmetrical bays, the south bay being a one-over-one double-hung sash window and the north bay being a wood Eastlake-style door similar to the one of the south facade.

The west elevation has four symmetrical bays with a three-bay dormer window centrally located on the roof. Also evident from this elevation is a c. 1920 frame kitchen addition to the dwelling. This addition contains a stoop and wood door entrance along with a small one-over-one double-hung window.

The north elevation is the rear of the dwelling and has two symmetrical window bays.

The interior plan is arranged around a central hall, with extant Classical Revival mantels with tile-lined fireplaces in the southeast and southwest parlors. Narrow-sawed wood floors, plaster walls and ceilings, and wood baseboards are extant throughout the first floor and attic. The interior also has extant Eastlake-influenced interior doors with transoms. The original room configurations and their defining architectural details are largely intact, although the house has not been used as a dwelling for the last ten years and has instead served as a clubhouse and studio for a group of local artists. (C)

13. Equipment Shed (c. 1950)

Frame, vertical board 40-foot by 20-foot building with metal gable roof and concrete pier foundation. The south facade has five symmetrical open bays, with a north (rear) shed-roofed addition opening onto a single bay, facing west. (C)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 6

Harlinsdale Farm
Williamson County Tennessee

14. Springhouse (c. 1900, 1920)

A stone rectangular building with a metal gable roof. Originally a springhouse, the structure was turned into the farm's water pump once electrical power was installed c. 1920. The south facade has a vertical wood board door. (C)

15. Tenant House (c. 1900, 1935)

A log double-pen dwelling with a central brick chimney, cut stone foundation and a collapsed gable roof, which has led to significant deterioration of the exterior walls. The dwelling was moved from its original site in the pasture it now adjoins to the east in 1935. (NC, due to deterioration)

16. Smokehouse (c. 1900)

Weatherboard frame building with stone pier foundation and deteriorated asphalt shingle gable roof. The walls and foundation of the building have not yet suffered from significant deterioration. Single wood door entrance on south facade. (C)

17. Dairy Barn (1926)

Transverse crib frame barn, approximately 60-foot by 80-foot, with metal gable roof large open hayloft with hood. Ventilation vents are designed into the south facade and north elevation. A rectangular metal gable roof ventilation cupola is centered on the roofline. Concrete pier foundation. Metal shed roof livestock stalls installed on west and east elevations c. 1960. (C)

18. Silo (1948)

Concrete and metal capped silo. (C)

19. Stock barn (1912, c. 1975)

Rectangular-shaped transverse crib frame barn, with large open hayloft with hood and pole shed addition constructed on north elevation c. 1975. Metal gable roof and concrete pier foundation. Slatted twin wood doors at the central aisle entrance. (C)

20. Silo (1948)

Concrete and metal capped silo. (C)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 7

Harlinsdale Farm
Williamson County Tennessee

21. Stone walls and stone ditch. (c. 1935)

A low stone wall encloses part of the pasture located to the rear (north) of the farmhouse. In the middle of the pasture is a v-shaped stone irrigation ditch that moved water pumped from the springhouse into this pasture. This is a contributing structure. (C)

22. Chicken House (c. 1930)

Frame, gable-front chicken house on concrete and stone pier foundation with metal roof. (C)

23. Small Stock Barn/Shed (c. 1960)

Frame, gable-front entrance building with concrete pier foundation and metal gable roof. This combination barn/shed is used both for temporary storage of animals and for equipment. (NC, due to date of construction)

24. Field patterns, fences, and roads (c. 1900-1950)

The farm landscape is enhanced by extant field patterns, board and wire fences, and historic roads that pass through the farm. These constituted a contributing site to the property. (C)

Harlinsdale Farm retains the integrity of its historical appearance. Not only does the landscape look the same as it did in the late 1930s and early 1940s, but it also retained its historical function of that period until its sale to the City of Franklin in 2005.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 8Harlinsdale Farm
Williamson County Tennessee**Statement of Significance**

Harlinsdale Farm, a 198-acre property at 236 Franklin Road in Franklin, Williamson County, Tennessee, is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places for its statewide significance in agriculture as Tennessee's most significant extant historic stables associated with the modern Tennessee Walking Horse industry from 1935 to 1956. The property also possesses local architectural significance as a cohesive, extant collection of buildings that became a model for the image and appearance of the Tennessee Walking Horse stables. Dating from c. 1900, the farm complex represents an archetypical Middle Tennessee farm that would turn into one of the premier Walking Horse sites in the state. The collection of buildings includes the walking horse farm and the dairy farm complexes, complete with laborer houses, equipment sheds, a smokehouse, a farmhouse, various horse and livestock barns, a dairy barn, and silos.¹

Agricultural Significance

The Tennessee Walking Horse was initially bred as a light horse, better suited for riding than farm work, during the settlement period of Tennessee history. Its emergence as one of the state's most internationally recognized livestock products, began, in large part, to the breeding, training, and promotion of a few select horses by A. M. Dement, a farmer outside of Wartrace, Bedford County, Tennessee. Described by one historian as "the foremost experimental breeder of Walking Horses," Dement showed off his new breed at the 1905 Tennessee State Fair, where a three-year-old mare won every class she competed in. Dement insisted that "a breed of horses could be produced that would perform the running walk naturally."² Dement's first recognized Tennessee Walker was a horse he acquired and trained named "Allan," which was later recognized as the foundation horse for the modern breed. "Since the offspring of ALLAN have been born," observed historian Bob Womack, "the basic movements of the Walking Horse have not changed, except in matters of degree. In breeding and in gaits these offspring were Walking Horses;

¹ Harlinsdale Farm is the only Tennessee Walking Horse breeding stables individually listed in the *Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture* website (<http://tennesseeencyclopedia.net>). Its significance as a model design is noted in a Tennessee Department of Transportation assessment of the Wilson Tennessee Walking Horse Farm in Sumner County. The preservationist noted that the Wilson Farm Showbarn "followed the picturesque siting of Tennessee Walking Horse Showbarns—first used at the Harlinsdale Showbarn, built ca. 1935 near Franklin, Williamson County, and the Haynes Haven Showbarn, which was built in 1938 near Spring Hill, Maury County." Copy of report on Wilson Tennessee Walking Horse Farm, Sumner County, provided to the author by the Tennessee Historical Commission.

² Bob Womack, *The Echo of Hoofbeats: A History of the Tennessee Walking Horse*, 2nd Ed., (Shelbyville: Dabora, 1984), 141.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 9

Harlinsdale Farm
Williamson County Tennessee

they were the first horses in the world to share the blood of current-day Walking Horses.”³

Not until the depression decade, however, would various Walking Horse owners join together to police and promote the new breed of pleasure horse. In 1935 at Lewisburg, Marshall County, a group of breeders, local officials, and businessmen established the Tennessee Walking Horse Breeders’ Association of America, an organization that set out to create a breed registry for the Tennessee Walking Horse. The leader of this group was Lewisburg publisher, businessman, and local official (and future Tennessee governor) Jim Nance McCord. “Extremely interested in the progressive effort to develop Tennessee livestock, especially Jersey cattle, McCord headed most local efforts at improving cattle breeds and served as president of the American Jersey Breeders’ Association, for which he also conducted cattle auctions. He also helped to convince federal agricultural officials to locate a U.S. Dairy Experiment Farm specializing in Jersey cattle on a five-hundred-acre tract south of Lewisburg. This facility is now part of the University of Tennessee’s Extension Service program. By the 1930s Lewisburg was a milk-producing center, with several large dairies in operation. In 1935 McCord was the first secretary-treasurer of the Tennessee Walking Horse Breeders Association of America.”⁴

The effort to produce a nationally recognized stud book for the breed succeeded so well that the new association struggled to keep up with the number of horses being registered, as the number of horses being sold and the prices they commanded steadily rose from 1935 to 1945. In 1939 the Tennessee Walking Horse National Celebration, which soon became the primary competition for the breed, was established in Shelbyville, Bedford County. “As the decade of the forties opened,” observed Bob Womack, “the Walking Horse industry was riding a crest of unparalleled success.”⁵

But the 1940s also brought controversy into the new agricultural industry. Owners generally viewed Tennessee Walking horses into two groups: pleasure horses, which were great riders but also good for farm work, and show horses, which received much more specific training to excel in the ring and win competitions, bringing their owners wealth through sales and stud fees. Soon the different perspectives hardened into distinct approaches to the future of the industry. As Womack explains, “a group firmly entrenched in the Breeders’ Association viewed the Walking Horse as a pleasure mount and believed that the future of the industry should be built on this foundation. Another group saw the show horse was the

³ Ibid., 148-149.

⁴ Governor Jin Nance McCord Papers, Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville; “Jim Nance McCord,” *Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture*, electronic edition, 2003, <http://tennesseeencyclopedia.net>.

⁵ Womack, 290-291; quote is on p. 291.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 10

Harlinsdale Farm
Williamson County Tennessee

industry's greatest hope and advocated a course of action in which this type animal would serve as a cornerstone of progress."⁶

Siding with the "show horses" group were brothers Wirt and Alex Harlin, who had opened their modern horse stable, Harlinsdale Farm, outside of Franklin in 1935. The Harlins were Nashville businessmen, who founded the clothing firm of Harlin Bros. & Williams in 1923. The firm specialized in occupational apparel and was best known for its Red Kap brand. The company proved to be extremely successful, filling a niche in the garment industry in America. The Harlins soon expanded operations beyond Nashville to plants in medium and small Mid-South communities. Taking their wealth and assuming the life of the southern landed gentleman, they also expanded their interests into the bred horse industry, acquiring 198 acres of prime farmland, next to the Dortch Stove Works, and establishing a modern horse stables, named Harlinsdale Farm, in 1934-1935.

When the Harlins established their farm along the Franklin Road, the property had already experienced two distinct periods of development. The first dated c. 1900 to c. 1930 when a progressive dairy farm operated on the 198 acres, producing corn, small grains, and livestock. The Harlins incorporated this already existing dairy farm, which included a farmhouse, various domestic outbuildings, and farm work buildings and structures, into their operation. It became home for Harlin Hayes, the lead trainer of Walking Horses at the farm. Hayes was a particularly well-respected trainer of Tennessee Walkers and the day-to-day administrator of the stables. In addition to the impressive 1935 Walking Horse stable, during their ownership, the Harlins made two major additions to farm in 1948 when they built two large concrete silos. The new silos allowed them to purchase and store grain and gave them an opportunity to open up more land for pasture. With the operating farm and horse stable, the overall Harlinsdale Farm landscape became visually dominated by open pasture for the horses, most visible from the roadside where they served as constant advertising for the stables, and further emphasized the farm's focus on show horses.

The second distinct period was from 1929 to 1930 when the owners of the adjacent Dortch Stove Works constructed several individual dwellings as a first phase of a small housing development for factory workers. Also standing on the property and associated with the factory, was a powerhouse, constructed in 1929, by the Franklin Light and Power Company.⁷ The Harlins used the powerhouse as an electrical source until municipal power came through the federal rural electrification program and the Tennessee Valley Authority. The brothers then converted the building into an equipment building. The Harlins also used the company housing as dwellings for the skilled white workers that they employed at the stable. (The Harlins moved c.

⁶ Ibid., 292.

⁷ Franklin *Review Appeal*, December 12, 1929.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 11

Harlinsdale Farm
Williamson County Tennessee

1945 two houses from the main entrance lane of the farm to a new location to the south of the main horse stable.⁸⁾

While the Harlins incorporated existing buildings into their Harlinsdale Farm, the centerpiece of their property was the stable complex built at the core of the farm, facing U. S. Highway 31. Harlinsdale Farm's statewide agricultural significance lies in the pivotal role it played in the development and transformation of the Tennessee Walking Horse industry between 1943 and 1956.

The show horse that changed the course of history at Harlinsdale Farm, and the Tennessee Walking Horse industry in general, was Midnight Sun. In 1943 the Harlins acquired a horse named Joe Lewis Wilson, renamed the stallion Midnight Sun, and developed the horse into the industry's most important symbol. After finishing second at the Celebration in 1944, Midnight Sun was the first stallion to be named World Grand Champion at the Tennessee Walking Horse National Celebration in Shelbyville in 1945, and became the first repeat champion in 1946. Harlin Hayes was the trainer; Fred "Red" Laws was the handler; and Fred Walker was the rider. As Bob Womack has argued in *The Echo of Hoofbeats*, Midnight Sun was "the single most potent force" in the breed.⁹ In his championship years of 1945 and 1946 Midnight Sun won acclaim as "one of the greatest show horses and sires ever produced in America," and Womack refers to him as "unbeatable."¹⁰

Midnight Sun's success had two significant consequences for the industry. First, more and more people acquired Walking Horses and in turn needed professional trainers. Competition between trainers in late 1940s were extremely intense, and thus more so than in the past, success in the show ring "determined" which horses and trainers were "best." Those who owned Tennessee Walking Horses as merely pleasure horses found less and less demand for and interest in their animals. Show horses dominated the industry. Second, the offspring of Midnight Sun dominated most competitions, and sale prices, for Walking Horses in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Demands for Midnight Sun's stud service were so overwhelming that the Harlins decided to develop a program of artificial insemination for Harlinsdale's breeding program to meet its demand and to ensure that Midnight Sun's bloodlines continued to dominate the industry. The result of the artificial insemination produced many excellent horses, but quickly the industry outstripped the demand for horses, and prices fell hard.¹¹

⁸ Interview by author of Bill Harlin, at Harlinsdale Farm, September 1995.

⁹ Bob Womack, *The Echo of Hoofbeats: The History of the Tennessee Walking Horse* (Shelbyville, TN, 1984), 175.

¹⁰ Womack, 167, 169

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 292-296.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 12Harlinsdale Farm
Williamson County Tennessee

The technology of artificial insemination was extremely controversial in the industry. In 1952, the Breeders' Association approved a new rule forbidding the listing of any horse in the registry that resulted from artificial insemination. Many owners ignored the new rule. When the National Celebration continued to allow owners to show horses produced by artificial insemination, the Breeders' Association withdrew its endorsement and involvement in the Celebration and began to hold its own annual horse show. Harlinsdale Farm ignored the protests of the Breeders' Association and continued its artificial insemination program.¹² Almost ten years after winning the championship, in 1955, Midnight Sun was breeding 750 to a 1000 times per year, through artificial insemination, and these numbers continued until 1965, the year he died.¹³

The Breeders' Association believed that the Celebration judges were so favorable to Midnight Sun's offspring that competition was of little use. The divide between the two groups basically meant that two organizations vied for control of the profitable industry. But in the eyes of owners and fans, results at the Celebration increasingly determined which trainer and breeder were the best. Harlinsdale Farm benefited significantly from this shift in influence from the Breeders' Association to the Celebration. In fact, the offspring of Midnight Sun claimed the title of World Grand Champion 39 times from 1947 to 1995, or 87% of the winners.¹⁴ In August 1955 *Sports Illustrated* published its first article on the Walking Horse industry. The magazine observed: "[t]he result of Midnight Sun's widespread mass breeding was to give him a monopoly on the whole Walking Horse breeding business," which also meant that Harlinsdale Farm had a monopoly on this increasingly profitable business.¹⁵

Midnight Sun's enormous popularity—and Harlinsdale's successful breeding program-- significantly influenced the post-war boom in the Tennessee Walking Horse industry. The industry changed from an informal and local competition between working horses to an endeavor that concentrated on show horses for its own sake. The money generated by the transition of the Tennessee Walking Horse industry from a largely under-funded sport or hobby to a capital-intensive industry was responsible for its survival immediately after World War II. Midnight Sun was the scion of the new breed and the vehicle by which the Tennessee Walking Horse industry took on a new status in American society. And Harlinsdale Farm became a model for hundreds of other professional trainer horse stables across the country.

¹² Ibid., 298-299.

¹³ The article is cited in Womack, 297-8

¹⁴ Records of the Tennessee Walking Horse National Celebration, The Celebration Offices, Calsonic Arena, Shelbyville, TN.

¹⁵ Ibid.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 13

Harlinsdale Farm
Williamson County Tennessee

The shift to show horses and artificial insemination techniques perfected at Harlinsdale Farm also profoundly affected on the industry. Historian Bob Womack concludes that as the industry gained economic stability, it “lost many of the people who had made the Walking Horse the nation’s fastest growing breed” of horses. The success of professional breeding and training operations like Harlinsdale meant that owners assumed that “unless a breeder was ‘in’ the right crowd, he had little hope for success at horse show. The ‘one gallus’ breeder saw little encouragement for his kind and bowed out. With him went much of the knowledge and integrity from the industry.”¹⁶

Due in no small part to its reputation and success as a breeding and training center for show horses, Harlinsdale Farm by 1955 was a center for a vital, expanding agricultural industry. The Tennessee Walking Horse eventually eclipsed Jersey cattle as most recognized livestock breed in the state. The first registry of the association counted 208 horses; the list now totals over 430,000, documenting the stunning growth of the industry in the middle and late decades of the twentieth century.¹⁷ According to 2000 data, 51,000 Tennessee Walking Horses exist in Tennessee, and with 190,000 horses overall Tennessee ranks third in the nation in horse production.¹⁸

Architectural Significance

Due to its success as a Walking Horse breeding and training center, Harlinsdale Farm has been a model by which other breeders and trainers in the industry have patterned the layouts of their stables. Other successful horse breeding farms, such as Haynes Haven in Spring Hill, Maury County, and the Wilson Farm in Sumner County, followed the precedents of Harlinsdale’s design and layout. Instead of the traditional Tennessee placement of the main barn behind a centrally located house, with the barn’s primary entry being on its gable end and facing the rear of the house, the Harlins chose a new model that highlighted the horse stables. By drawing attention to the central structure, through a lengthwise positioning and unusual cross-gable placement of the primary entryway and facade on this long side, the architecture becomes a social statement of pride and position.

The main horse barn contains impressive craftsmanship and balances work spaces for employees and stalls for the horses. Its exterior facade reflects an unmistakable 1920s industrial aesthetic: here was a facility to produce horses, large numbers of them, for sale. The photographs of winning horses that line the wall of the stables

¹⁶ Ibid., 299-301.

¹⁷ The numbers of 208 and 400,000 come from the website of the Tennessee Walking Horse Breeders’ and Exhibitors’ Association.

¹⁸ Associated Press wire story, February 21, 2000.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 14

Harlinsdale Farm
Williamson County Tennessee

office are similar to ones found in an industrial office where a company highlights its products. The photographs also constitute a visual museum of the Walking Horse breed. Further, the main complex sits behind nearly 23 acres of pasture at the end of a 700 foot road, creating within the visitor an impression of a mansion set back in the rolling acres of its grounds. The careful landscaping and the huge horse barn told potential investors in the new industry that Harlinsdale Farm was a classy, progressive, and successful livestock farm. This image of graciousness was vital for the industry's success since a large part of the marketing charm of the Tennessee Walking Horse lies with its association with the image of genteel southern culture and tradition. The pride of accomplishment evident in the Harlins' choice of design has since been adopted by the totality of Walking Horse owners and trainers, and is now the usual form a Middle Tennessee barn complex takes, even when the size of lots and scale of structures don't produce the same effect as does Harlinsdale Farm.

The earlier c. 1900 to c. 1935 dairy and livestock farm complex at Harlinsdale Farm also is a distinctive grouping of agricultural buildings from the progressive era of farming. The two large stock barns and silos are excellent representative examples of a type of functional farm architecture from the mid-twentieth century. The c. 1900 Harlin Hayes House is a fine example of a gable-front and wing with Victorian era influenced rural dwelling and contains an almost complete component of domestic outbuildings, including a dairy, smokehouse, and tenant house.

Perhaps the most unexpected architectural feature of Harlinsdale Farm is how the owners kept and used earlier buildings that had been built initially for industrial purposes: the powerhouse initially designed for electrical production at the adjacent Dortch Stove Works and the four Colonial Revival-influenced dwellings that had been initially planned as company housing for workers at the factory. The Harlins turned the powerhouse into a storage building and used the dwellings for white laborers who worked with the horses at the stables. The Colonial Revival-influenced dwellings are more typical of the type of housing found in a company town plan than what tenants were provided on mid-twentieth century Tennessee farms. Like the overall industrial aesthetic of the show barns, these houses emphasize how Harlins saw their stables as an industrial enterprise.

Harlinsdale Farm certainly proved to be a profitable venture that shaped the modern Tennessee Walking Horse industry for decades. In 2005, the City of Franklin acquired the entire farm and is now developing plans to transform the farm into a city

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 15

Harlinsdale Farm
Williamson County Tennessee

park, one that will also celebrate and preserve Harlinsdale's unique agricultural history as a leader in Tennessee's Walking Horse industry.¹⁹

¹⁹ See the City of Franklin's website (www.franklin-gov.com) for a description of preliminary plans in the section on Parks and Recreation.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 16

Harlinsdale Farm
Williamson County Tennessee

Bibliography

Green, Ben A. *The Biography of the Tennessee Walking Horse*. Nashville: Parthenon Press, 1960.

Franklin *Review Appeal*. 1929, 1935, 1945.

Harlin, William, interviewed at Harlinsdale by Van West, September 1995 and March 2005 and Gregory P. Lynch, December 1995.

"Harlinsdale Farm." Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture, online edition. University of Tennessee Press, 2003. Accessed August 15, 2005.

Hill, Steve, Mrs.. "The Tennessee Walking Horse." Research paper, Middle Tennessee State College, 1956.

"McCord, Jim Nance." Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture, online edition. University of Tennessee Press, 2003. Accessed August 15, 2005.

McCord, Jim Nance. Papers. Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville.

"Midnight Sun" website. www.walkerswest.com/Champs/MidnightSun Accessed September 21, 2005.

Tennessee Walking Horse Breeders' and Exhibitors' Association (Lewisburg, Tennessee) website. Assessed September 22, 2005.

Tennessee Walking Horse National Celebration Association. *The Gallery of Grand Champions*. Shelbyville, TN: Tennessee Walking Horse National Celebration Association, 1990.

Womack, Bob. *The Echo of Hoofbeats: The History of the Tennessee Walking Horse*. Shelbyville, TN.: Dabora, 1984.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 17

Harlinsdale Farm
Williamson County Tennessee

Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description and Justification

The nominated property is at 236 Franklin Road and includes all property listed in tax map 63, parcel 31, roughly bounded by Franklin Road, the Harpeth River, the Franklin city limits and the boundaries of Williamson County District 8, as documented in the enclosed Williamson County Tax Map. The nominated parcel is the site of the present and past Harlinsdale Farm. The boundaries include the present farm boundaries that contain all historically significant structures that pertain to the Harlin family's Tennessee Walking Horse breeding program and the archetypal main barn compound plan.

The map scale for this property is 1" = 400.' It is the only scale map available for this part of Williamson County.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number photos Page 18 Harlinsdale Farm
Williamson County Tennessee

Photographs

Harlinsdale Farm
Williamson County, Tennessee
Photos by: Carroll Van West
MTSU Center for Historic Preservation
Date: March 2005
Negatives: Tennessee Historical Commission
Nashville, TN

Main Horse Stable, facing west
1 of 35

Main Horse Stable, facing west
2 of 35

Main Horse Stable, detail of center bay
3 of 35

Main Horse Stable, north elevation and west facade, facing southeast
4 of 35

Main Horse Stable, office, facing northwest
5 of 35

Main Horse Stable, east entrance hallway, facing west
6 of 35

Main Horse Stable, roof trusses, east entrance hallway, facing east
7 of 35

Main Horse Stable, second floor hayloft and roof trusses, facing north
8 of 35

Main Horse Stable, second floor catwalk, facing south
9 of 35

Main Horse Stable, breeders work room, facing north
10 of 35

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places

Continuation Sheet

Section number photos Page 19

Harlinsdale Farm
Williamson County Tennessee

Midnight Sun grave, facing east
11 of 35

Equipment House/Power House, facing southwest
12 of 35

Equipment House/ Power House, facing northwest
13 of 35

Secondary Stock barn, facing west
14 of 35

Laborers' houses, facing south
15 of 35

Laborers' houses, facing east
16 of 35

Open pasture, facing south
17 of 35

Small horse stalls, facing west
18 of 35

Large horse stalls, facing northwest
19 of 35

Pasture and Harpeth River, facing west
20 of 35

Historic farm road to Hayes Farm, facing north
21 of 35

Open pasture in front of Main Horse Stable, facing southeast
22 of 35

Open pasture between Hayes Farm and Main Horse Stable, facing south
23 of 35

Hayes Farm complex, facing east
24 of 35

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places

Continuation Sheet

Section number photos Page 20

Harlinsdale Farm
Williamson County Tennessee

Hayes Farmhouse, facing northwest
25 of 35

Southeast parlor, Hayes Farmhouse, facing northwest
26 of 35

Northwest parlor, Hayes Farmhouse, facing southeast
27 of 35

Springhouse and tenant house, Hayes Farm complex, facing northeast
28 of 35

Smokehouse, Hayes Farm complex, facing north
29 of 35

Stone irrigation ditch and wall, facing east
30 of 35

Stock barn and silo, facing southwest
31 of 35

Stock barn, facing northwest
32 of 35

Dairy barn and silo, facing south
33 of 35

Dairy barn and silo, facing north
34 of 35

Historic road, Hayes Farm complex, facing north
35 of 35